

July 15, 2013

Senate Appeals Committee
c/o Erika Hansen-Reeder
Assistant Director of the University Secretariat
University of Ottawa
Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland, Ottawa, Ontario

RE: Appeal of the Executive Committee (EC) of the Faculty of Graduate and Post Doctoral Studies (FGPS) decision dated May 10, 2013 not to allow me to defend revised thesis orally

Dear members of the Senate Appeals Committee:

After over five years of tireless research I was informed that my revised thesis, which was supervised, conforms to the thesis submission rules, and meets the expectations in the field (as evidenced by peer-reviewed journals), has failed and that I must withdraw from my program of studies. This decision has caused me tremendous stress and despair given the immense impact on my future, employment and livelihood. I have passionately invested my energy, my money, and my life to my studies over the last five years. My accomplishments while at the University of Ottawa include 5 peer-reviewed conference papers, and 5 peer-reviewed journal publications. Additionally, I was a two time recipient of the Ontario Graduate Scholarship, and won grants from both the Canadian and International Society of Biomechanics. Lastly, I established research collaborations with two research labs as well as successfully completed an advanced course in Musculoskeletal Modeling by Multibody Dynamics at Aalborg University, Denmark. While no small feat, my entire thesis (in article style format) consisting of 5 peer-reviewed journal papers, on the basis of which was evaluated by four thesis examiners (two internal and two external examiners), are all presently published in reputable journals. Not only have I done my very best, but I have met (and exceeded in certain areas) all of the School of Human Kinetics (SHK) and FGPS requirements for a doctoral degree, and yet I am unable to defend my thesis. My accomplishments prior to my doctoral studies, as well as while conducting my doctoral studies at the University of Ottawa demonstrates my ability to create and disseminate knowledge.

As elucidated in my appeal documentation enclosed, the Dean of FGPS inserting himself as a thesis examiner as well as refusing to recuse himself from the Executive Appeals Committee (that was hearing a decision rendered by him) is unjust. Both parties, that is, the Dean of FGPS and the EC of FGPS do not have the knowledge (i.e. in my study domain) to evaluate my thesis. Despite presenting these parties with all the evidence they did not mention or weigh arguments I made, nor did they mention those that they rejected. As a result, it is unclear to me if some of my arguments were considered and why/how they were rejected. Both the Dean and the EC of FGPS decision letter are not only inadequate, but questions whether I have been dealt with fairly. I find the reasons used by these parties to fail me insufficient and non-transparent. While the

Dean admitted to ambiguity in FGPS regulations, a reasonable decision should have indicated how both the Dean and the EC of FGPS considered and assessed the arguments and evidence I presented. Respectfully, I found the EC of FGPS decision to fail me was not thoroughly investigated given the due process to scrutinize my case was not fulfilled.

Despite Dr. Mario Lamontagne ending his duties as my supervisor well over three years ago, this professor has purposefully and maliciously set out to hinder my research progress, defame me, and tarnish the minds of others against me. This professor claims to be acting as a messenger but has shrewdly and vindictively aimed to stop me from graduating, which has partly contributed to my present challenges. The malice and ill intent of Professor Lamontagne may have compromised the objectivity of thesis examiners, the Executive Committee members and the Department of Health Sciences at the University of Ottawa. Professor Lamontagne has stated that he **“will use all [his] recourses to abort this [my] thesis project.”** It would appear that this professor lacks the maturity and professionalism to set aside his more or less prejudicial and malicious attitude. I am extremely concerned about this professor and the SHK’s backdoor/silent communications aimed at tainting the minds and compromising the objectivity of decision makers on my case. This professor has shown a singular goal to harm the progress of my research and ensure I fail by prejudicing the minds of staff, students and faculty at the University of Ottawa, and this cannot be overlooked. I know there have been many rumours and silent backdoor discussions about “my arrogance towards kinesiologist”, and me “poisoning the well”. Even if this was true, my personality is not under evaluation, is not relevant in enabling a decision, is not pertinent to the quality of my thesis, and therefore should be set aside.

Furthermore, it is clear that Dr. Edward Lemaire is not a bona fide examiner. Dr. Lemaire’s sudden refusal to evaluate my initial thesis and consequently to be a part of my thesis committee, then later reverting to being a part of my thesis committee, as well as, his admittance of being biased are all clear indications that Dr. Lemaire’s evaluation of my thesis should be set aside. In addition, the Department of Health Sciences determined and confirmed that there was a “conflict of interest” between my supervisor and external thesis examiner, Dr. Graham Caldwell. This is true given the publication and collaboration of a text book and text book chapters by my supervisor and Professor Caldwell performed during the evaluation of my thesis. It is perplexing and most unreasonable that despite the Department of Health Sciences declaring such conflict of interest; this professor was still allowed to evaluate my thesis. Finally, the preparation and evaluation of my thesis was plagued with numerous administrative challenges as highlighted in my appeal documentation including but not limited to, inappropriate use and administration of thesis form sent with my revised thesis as well as lack of fairness in supervision.

In summary, no doctoral candidate should be failed on the standards of quality of the research after writing a supervised thesis that conforms to the thesis submission rules and to the expectations in the field as evidenced by peer-reviewed journal publications. Two of the main goals of the university are the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Peer-reviewed journal publications are one of the principal means of evaluating whether

or not a professor, department, or the university accomplishes these goals. Obviously, this should also apply to evaluating a graduate student. Therefore, given the triumph of publishing my thesis after an extensive amount of work conducted exclusively by myself with minimal assistance from my advisors, the Dean's refusal to recuse himself, the Dean and the EC of FGPS evaluation of my thesis (despite their lack of knowledge in my study domain), evidence showing Professor Lamontagne's goal to defame me, evidence showing admitted bias of an internal thesis examiner, established conflict of interest determined by the Department of Health Sciences between my supervisor and an external thesis examiner, and several highlighted procedural injustices, I kindly request all senate members to grant me the dignity to orally defend my thesis. As an alternative option, I humbly request a reconstituted thesis committee to evaluate my thesis. Finally, I respectfully request all members of the Senate Appeals Committee with a duty to fairness to ensure that due process, transparency, and full disclosure in my appeal is achieved. Should you have any questions or need clarification on the content of my appeal documentation, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am indebted to you for your time, effort and consideration of my plight, and earnestly thank you in advance for your impartiality.

Sincerely,

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